

# AHS Table Creator Help

1. [Tutorial with examples](#)
2. [Downloading](#)
3. [Rounding and median formatting](#)
4. [Cell suppression](#)
5. [Missing values](#)
6. [Row and column variable ranges](#)
7. [Margins of Error](#)
8. [Geography](#)
9. [About the American Housing Survey](#)
10. [Technical documentation](#)
11. [Didn't find what you were looking for?](#)

## [Tutorial with examples](#) [back to top](#)

1. [Create a simple table](#)
2. [Create a table with column variables](#)
3. [Create a table that displays nested column variables](#)

**Create a simple table** [back to top](#)

- NOTE: You can create a table by selecting an Area, Year and a Table, while using the default selections for all other sections of the form.
- To create a table that shows plumbing characteristics at the national level of geography from the 2013 AHS:
  - Select "National" from the Area selection box.
  - Select "2013" from the Year selection box.
  - Select "Plumbing, Water, and Sewage Disposal" from the Table selection box.
  - Press the "Get Table" button at the bottom of the form.
  - This creates the table below. NOTE: The table below is just an excerpt for demonstration purposes. The actual table has many more rows.

**2013 National - Plumbing, Water, and Sewage Disposal - All Occupied Units**

[Numbers in thousands, except as indicated. Weighting consistent with Census 2010. Blank cells represent or round to zero; '.' represents not applicable or no cases in sample.]

[See Appendix A for definitions](#)

Characteristics	National
Total	115852
Primary Source of Water	
Public or private system	102264
Well serving 1 to 5 units	13232
Drilled	12076
Dug	765
Not reported	392
Other	355

**Create a table with column variables** [back to top](#)

- NOTE: If you previously created the first example table, then use the “Reset” button in the tool to reset the form. The steps below presume you have not created the previous example table.
- To create a table that shows plumbing characteristics at the national level of geography by urban area from the 2013 AHS:
  - Select "National" from the Area selection box.
  - Select “2013” from the Year selection box.
  - Select "Plumbing, Water, and Sewage Disposal" from Table selection box.
  - Under Column Variables, select "2010 Urban Area" (under the Geography heading) from the Variable 1 selection box.
  - Press the "Get Table" button at the bottom of the form.
  - This creates the table below. NOTE: The table below is just an excerpt for demonstration purposes. The actual table has many more rows.
  - NOTE: The column variable you selected appears below the table title (seen in red in the example below).

**2013 National - Plumbing, Water, and Sewage Disposal - All Occupied Units**

**Variable 1: 2010 Urban Area, Variable 2: None**

[Numbers in thousands, except as indicated. Weighting consistent with Census 2010. Blank cells represent or round to zero; '.' represents not applicable or no cases in sample.]

[See Appendix A for definitions](#)

Characteristics	2010 Urban Area			
	Total	Urbanized Area	Urban Cluster	Rural
Total	115852	81641	11059	23152
Primary Source of Water				
Public or private system	102264	79173	10328	12763
Well serving 1 to 5 units	13232	2409	717	10106
Drilled	12076	2197	673	9206
Dug	765	106	25	634
Not reported	392	106	19	267
Other	355	59	14	282

**Create a table that displays nested column variables** [back to top](#)

- To create a table that nests the previously created Plumbing, Water, and Sewage Disposal by Tenure and by Hispanic origin:
  - NOTE: If you previously created either of the other example tables, then use the "Reset" button in the tool to reset the form. The steps below presume you have not created the previous example table.
  - Select "National" from the Area selection box.
  - Select "2013" from the Year selection box.
  - Select "Plumbing, Water, and Sewage Disposal" from the Table selection box.
  - Under Column Variables, select "Tenure" (under the General heading) from the Variable 1 selection box.
  - Under Column Variables, select "Hispanic Origin of Householder" (under the Demographics heading) from the Variable 2 selection box.
  - Press the "Get Table" button at the bottom of the form.
  - This creates the table below -- notice that the counts of "Hispanic Origin of Householder" are nested within each value of "Tenure." NOTE: The table below is just an excerpt for demonstration purposes. The actual table has many more columns and rows.
  - NOTE: The column variable you selected appears below the table title (seen in red in the example below).

**2013 National - Plumbing, Water, and Sewage Disposal - All Occupied Units**


**Variable 1: Tenure, Variable 2: Hispanic Origin of Householder**

[Numbers in thousands, except as indicated. Weighting consistent with Census 2010. Blank cells represent or round to zero; '.' represents not applicable or no cases in sample.]

[See Appendix A for definitions](#)

Characteristics	Tenure						
	Total			Owner			Renter
	Hispanic Origin of Householder			Hispanic Origin of Householder			Hispanic Origin of Householder
	Total	Hispanic*	Not Hispanic	Total	Hispanic*	Not Hispanic	Total
<b>Total</b>	115852	14675	101176	75650	6897	68753	40201
<b>Primary Source of Water</b>							
Public or private system	102264	14085	88179	63799	6437	57362	38465
Well serving 1 to 5 units	13232	561	12671	11592	448	11144	1640
Drilled	12076	498	11578	10679	403	10277	1396
Dug	765	36	728	657	32	625	107
Not reported	392	27	365	255	13	242	137
Other	355	28	327	259	12	247	97

## [Downloading](#) [back to top](#)

HTML is the default download option. You can also download tables in Excel. Click the  (down arrow) on the top-right tool bar and choose the Excel option. A box may pop up asking you what software you would like to use to open the file. Microsoft Excel should be the default. Click “Okay” or “Open,” depending on what browser you are using. In some browsers, you may get the following message: “The file you are trying to open is in a different format than specified by the file extension. Verify that the file is not corrupted and is from a trusted source before opening the file. Do you want to open the file now?” Click “Yes.”

## [Rounding and median formatting](#) [back to top](#)

In 2011 and 2013, blank cells represent zero and rounds to zero. In 2015, blank cells represent true zeros and a Z represents estimates that round to zero. In both cases, “rounds to zero” refers to values that amount to less than half the unit of measurement shown (e.g. less than 500 housing units in National tables and less than 50 units in Metro tables, except in median or percent rows where another unit of measure may be indicated in parenthesis). Medians that appear in PDF, Excel summary tables, and American FactFinder with decimal places are rounded to the nearest whole number in Table Creator national tables (e.g. current interest rate). In Table Creator Excel downloads, medians where “Year” is the unit of measurement are formatted with a comma and, in some cases, a decimal. (e.g. 1,997 represents the year 1997 in National tables and 1,997.0 represents the year 1997 in Metro tables). HTML versions of tables are unaffected. In addition, cell suppression was introduced in 2015, resulting in a new symbol, S, which represents estimates that did not meet publication standards.

## [Cell suppression](#) [back to top](#)

Cell suppression has been added to 2015 estimates for disclosure reasons. Suppressed cells display as an ‘S’.

Suppression rules apply in the following two instances:

- When a table indicator uses a variable only on the Internal Use File (IUF).
- When a table indicator uses a variable from the Public Use File (PUF) **AND** is cross tabulated with a Column Variable by-group that is only on the Internal Use File (IUF).

In these instances, suppression occurs when unweighted cell counts are less than 3, the unweighted cell of a “related” indicator is less than 3, or when a child indicator has a “parent” indicator with an unweighted cell count of less than 3. (Parent indicators are rows that have other rows indented under them. The indented rows are the child rows that, when added together, sum up to the parent row.)

To do this, we grouped mutually exclusive indicators within each table stub according to parent/child relationships in order to identify which rows were “related” to one another. This allowed us to determine which related cells needed to be suppressed in order to prevent multidimensional disclosure (by subtraction) of any other cells within the group where at least one of the cells had an unweighted

count of less than 3.

### **Missing values** [back to top](#)

When there are no records for a particular cell, the software will place a ‘.’ in the cell. A ‘.’ is the result of one of the following scenarios: 1.) there were no housing units in the sample that met those conditions, or 2.) you are trying to cross tabulate two variables that do not share the same universe (the figure is not applicable because the column heading and stub line yield impossible, absurd, or meaningless results).

Note that if a valid column (or row) has no records for all rows (or columns), the column (or row) will NOT appear in the table at all. It will NOT be listed with the missing values symbol for all rows (or columns). For example, if tenure is selected as a column variable and then owner is selected from the Tenure filter, the renter column will not display. If you get an entire table with nothing in it, it likely means that you chose a table and variable or filter combination with all invalid values. E.g. If you select the Mortgage Characteristics table and then choose Tenure as your filter, you’ll see that the Renter column is all dots because renters cannot have a mortgage. Furthermore, if you then filter the table by Renters, the resulting table will be blank.

### **Row and column variable ranges** [back to top](#)

Variables involving ranges are pre-defined and cannot be customized. For example, square footage ranges are ‘Less than 500,’ ‘500 to 749,’ etc. and cannot be changed. Ranges can only be manipulated using the Public Use File.

### **Margins of Error** [back to top](#)

2015 tables include the added ability for users to display the Margin of Error (MOE) for each estimate. To display MOEs, select the “Estimates and Margins of Error” options from the “View” drop-down menu located in the Filter section of the Table Criteria menu panel.

Data are based on a sample and are subject to sampling variability. The degree of uncertainty for an estimate arising from sampling variability is represented through the use of a margin of error. The value shown here is the 90 percent margin of error. The margin of error can be interpreted roughly as providing a 90 percent probability that the interval defined by the estimate minus the margin of error and the estimate plus the margin of error (the lower and upper confidence bounds) contains the true value. In addition to sampling variability, the AHS estimates are subject to nonsampling error (for a discussion of nonsampling variability, see [Accuracy of the Data](#)). The effect of nonsampling error is not represented in these tables.

## [Geography](#) [back to top](#)

Click on the link above to access detailed information about the geographic indicators and geographic disclosure in the AHS samples from 1985 through 2013.

The 2015 AHS metropolitan areas exactly match the February 2013 Office of Management and Budget (OMB) definitions of Core Based Statistical Areas (CBSAs). However, for prior years that is not always the case because geographic boundaries change over time. To reduce confusion, more detail was added to metropolitan areas names below the table title. When comparing a metropolitan area between different survey years, use these detailed metropolitan area names to determine if they are comparable. For a detailed description of changes in geographic boundaries between 2015 and 2013, see [Summary of the Differences between the 2015 and 2013 AHS Metro Areas](#).

## [About the American Housing Survey](#) [back to top](#)

Click on the link above to find information about the purpose, sponsoring agency, frequency, historical background, topical coverage, and methodology of the Survey.

## [Technical Documentation](#) [back to top](#)

Click on the link above to access Appendices of the Summary Report for each survey year. Appendices include:

*Definitions* – Appendix A provides definitions and explanations of table stub titles (row headings in bold) and column headings.

*Sample Design and Weighting* – Appendix B provides information on how housing units were selected to be part of the sample and how each housing unit in the sample is weighted.

*Historical Changes* – Appendix C is a complete list of changes to the questionnaire and to the tables that have occurred since the previous survey.

*Errors* – Appendix D includes descriptions of the types of sampling and nonsampling errors and provides formulas for constructing confidence intervals. Note that in the 2015 AHS, this Appendix was combined with the Sample Design and Weighting documentation (Appendix B).

## [Didn't find what you were looking for?](#) [back to top](#)

Try the AHS microdata. The microdata, (a.k.a. Public Use File) are files containing individual household

responses to the survey questions, which can be used to generate custom tables. Data can be downloaded in SAS and ASCII formats. To get to the microdata, click on the [AHS Data page](#), select a year tab at the top and then click on “Public Use File (PUF)”.